Minutes: Iowa Council for Early ACCESS

Date, time, and

Date: March 5, 2010

place

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Place: Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston, Iowa

Attendance

Present: Michael Acarregui, Gladys Alvarez, Jeff Anderson (for DHS), Jodi Angus, Maggie Baker, Mike Bergan, Angela Burke Boston, Gina Greene, Angela Hance, Kelly Hancock, Stacy Kramer, Barbara Merrill, Rae Miller, Heather Moorman, LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl, Mary Stevens, Debra Waldron, Jane Borst Staff: Julie Curry, Marion Kresse, Rae Miller, Jim Donoghue, Angi Walker Excused: Daryl Beall, Mary Jane Brotherson, LaMark Combs, Sara Freiberg, Julie Hahn, Andrew Hall, Ron Koch, Bradford Kollars, Carolyn Sodders, Joann Stone,

Beth Troutman, Nansi Woods

Guests: Terie Emery, Rhonda Moore

Call to order

Kelly Hancock called meeting to order, introductions of Council members and guests took place.

Family Story

Terie Emery

Terie Emery is the girlfriend of Edwin Daye. Edwin was unable to attend the Council meeting, so Terie told their story. Edwin's son Patron was born with crack cocaine in his system, and was born prematurely. Patron had many difficulties, including feeding difficulties and delayed development. Terie and her family were referred to Early ACCESS, who was able to provide many resources. At one point, Edwin had a setback, and Terie and Edwin lost custody of Petron. Although the DHS worker told Terie and Edwin that they may not be able to regain custody of Patron, the Early ACCESS staff attended every hearing, and even wrote a letter recommending that Terie and Edwin regain custody. Terie was especially thankful that the Early ACCESS staff never judged her or her family. They were able to assist Terie in regaining custody of Patron.

When Edwin's niece was 6 months pregnant, she came to Terie and Edwin and asked whether they would be willing to take custody of her baby once it was born. She was addicted to crack cocaine. Terie shared that it was because of her success, and the helpfulness of the Early ACCESS staff that her and Edwin decided to welcome another child into their family. Their nephew tested positive for drug exposure, and was in worse shape than Patron when he was initially brought home. The experience that Terie and Edwin had with Early ACCESS has made them want to give back, by working with the DHS Parent Partners program. Today, Patron no longer shows any developmental delays, and his court case has been closed.

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Approval of previous minutes

The council reviewed the ICEA minutes from January 15, 2010. *Action.* Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Michael Bergan and seconded by Gladys Alverez. The motion passed.

Lead agency and signatory updates

Kelly Hancock

Kelly reviewed the topics discussed at the Executive committee meeting.

- Janet Gartin, who works for the Department of Management for the State of Iowa, gave a presentation on the Life Skills Progression Tool. Her PowerPoint presentation will be shared with the full Council at the May meeting. This tool is one of many that the Department of Education is considering to use in order to gather information on the Early ACCESS system. The Like Skills Progression Tool would help to show where the resources are currently going, in order to make improvements in the system.
- Julie Curry discussed informal concerns with the Executive Council. An issue has come up regarding children in foster care, and who qualifies as their "parent". The Department of Education's legal team is working with the Department of Human Services' legal team in order to establish one standard for both agencies to use. This will help service coordinators know with whom they are legally allowed to share information.
- LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl shared some information on the Memorandum of Agreement. A group activity will occur later in the meeting regarding the Four Year Action Plan. The Signatory Agencies are interested in the entire council's input on the plan.
- The State Application for Part C is currently open for comment. Julie shared that there have been some technical issues, and that these will hopefully be straightened out later today. A link to the website will be provided to the entire council for all members to view the application, and make comments.
- The signatory agency updates were available for all members to read and take with them.

Medicaid workgroup update

Jim Donoghue, Department of Education

The speaker briefly described the Iowa Infant Toddler Program for Medicaid program. A list of services covered was provided on a handout. He assists Area Education Agencies by giving presentations on Medicaid services.

The speaker noted one significant change to Medicaid this year. Previously, providers could be licensed through the Department of Education, or the Department of Public Health. The main difference in these two licensures is, the DPH licensure requires a Master's Degree, a one-year fellowship, and annual recertification. The DE licensure required only a Master's Degree. Medicaid now only allows billing from providers licensed through the Department of Public Health.

IDEA Part C historical and national perspectives that influence planning council priorities Julie Curry

Julie informed the group that in May the council will set a new priority for the next few years. Service Coordination has been the priority in the recent years. Julie showed the group a comparison between the priorities of Early ACCESS ten years ago, versus where the priorities are today. In 1999, Iowa was serving 1% of children; today we are serving approximately 3%. Ten years ago, the system was just being established, and many of the priorities were learning how to make the system work. Ten years ago, Early ACCESS was an under-utilized system. Today we have a robust inter-agency system. We are currently concerned with the quality of services provided; we have increased the number of children being served, but have not significantly increased funding.

Julie invited the group to review the APR, and to participate in a group activity, naming possible priorities for the future. This list well be revisited in the future, and a new plan will be developed in the next year and a half.

Suggestions for priorities included

- Direct Services especially in rural areas
- Tele-health Solution
- Accountability for implementing IFSP frequency of services
- Training of professionals who should be referring and are not
- Future planning- what training needs are there in the system?
- Need earlier identification of autism how can we address this?
- Learn what is coming down the pipe that would influence priorities
- Accountability for outcomes (what are effective strategies and the structures that need to be implemented, especially in rural areas)
- Access to services
- Quality of service (how to assess the practice?)
- Asset mapping
- Quality connections and importance of health and early learning services

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Legislative update

Jeff Anderson and LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl

This session has been very busy. One of the big pieces of legislation to be debated was the reorganization of state government bill. The early childhood portion of this bill has gone back and forth. Overall, the legislature is looking to have a unified approach, as much as is possible, in order to attain the goal of helping children.

DHS has many bills that will impact their services. One bill that will concern the council regards grandparents having say in how their grandchildren are raised, and having legal guardian rights. This issue has come to the forefront because families are looking differently than they did twenty years ago.

The budget has remained a large issue. Deciding how much should be cut, and from where to cut it are both difficult issues. This will be a difficult time for programs that provide services to families. The next revenue forecast will be on March 11th.

LauraBelle informed the council that Early ACCESS funds have been "level funded" for this year. These funds must be maintained in order to retain the federal funding. There may be a 25% cut to the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. This was supposed to be the last year for this funding, in order to get these programs established statewide. That may not be possible. These cuts will not include the school-ready funding from Empowerment.

A 10% across-the-board cut is being recommended again. This would be in addition to last year's 10% cut, which will be carried over into the next year's budget.

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Memorandum of agreement strategic plan small group activity Julie Curry

The Memorandum of Agreement calls for an Action Plan to decide what specific activities will be completed. Julie explained the small group activity where members reviewed the strategies and made recommendations to the large group on potential action steps. This will help to focus the Signatory Agencies' efforts, and identify areas that still need support and leadership. The following is a list of council member's suggestions.

- Suggestion to move some training to providers in order to empower the parents.
- Following up with violence response agencies
- Explore grant funding
- Need to contact doctor's offices
- Working with inter-agency councils, how to make this work at the local and regional level?
- QSR question if it only comes around to a region once every few years, how effective is that expense? Is there a way to take aspects of that model, and incorporate them into ongoing practice?
- Need to make sure that we recognize that there are national efforts, not to only concentrate on Iowa efforts.
- How do we let doctors know that "sit and wait" is not what we need?
- How do we approach the medical community to let them know that we need more resources for early testing?
- How do we use higher educational institutions to assist us, perhaps with translating into foreign languages - this could help get the word out about our programs as well.
- Need to get good understanding of how we are financed in our state and we need data to build a case for why we need more funding. Could we do projections for what our numbers will be and what our funding needs would then be? Possibly tap health statisticians.
- Need to establish relationships with Insurance companies.
- Need to publicize informal concern process in a better way.
- Identify a certain percentage of people who drop out, and contact them in order to find people who were not satisfied.
- How do we protect personal information, while still collecting necessary information and data on our programs?
- Can we get the data sharing process to be fast enough for it to be meaningful to parents?
- Need to clarify expectations from the program.

Committee reports

- Public Policy attended the Day on the Hill, and also the Early Childhood Congress in the morning. The legislators were open to listening and hearing suggestions. They spoke about maintenance of effort for Early ACCESS.
- By-laws and Membership committees reviewed attendance rules and will
 suggested language changes under attendance so that if a member misses half
 of the council meetings, they will be considered to have resigned. We will
 attempt to contact them regarding this, the governor will then have the
 opportunity to accept or reject the resignation. These changes will be further
 discussed and voted on at the May meeting.
- Nominations committee will be a sub-committee within the Membership committee. This sub-committee will meet at least once a year, and will provide a list of recommendations at the September meeting. The nominations committee has also worked on officers for the upcoming year. The group encouraged members to make any recommendations for membership.
- The by-laws do not prohibit members from attending a meeting through technological means. This accommodation could be made available to members.

Sharing

- Kelly shared that she gave a presentation to Iowa State students. This was an overwhelmingly good experience.
- Michael Bergan will be attending the Empowerment meeting next week, and has a ten minute slot to share about Early ACCESS.
- The AEAs are working together to do things more consistently throughout the state. A video modeling project will be started next year for children with autism, as well as a program for social skills training. They are also working on methods for earlier identification for autism.
- Stacy will be speaking to a Kiwanis group and a women's group in the upcoming weeks to speak about Early ACCESS. She has developed a parent's support group at her child's school.
- AEA 14 is involved in the compliance monitoring process. They have purchased wireless modems for service coordinators, as well as printers.
- Service Learning grants are a way to get more families/ professionals into the classroom with teachers.
- The next Quality Service Review will be in NE Iowa.

Adjournment 3:10 PM

Kelly Hancock noted that the next meeting will be on May 21st. Motion to adjourn by LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl, second by Heather Moorman. Motion carried.